

Message Text

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ORIGIN NEA-10

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY COLOMBO

UNCLAS STATE 228737

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: BDIS, CE

SUBJECT: TRADE COMPLAINT - PAPAYA LEAVES EMBARGO

REF: COLOMBO 2997

1. WHEN CONTACTED BY DEPT CONCERNING DETAILS OF THE REFERENCED TRADE COMPLAINT, HERBARIUM CLAIMED THAT IT HAS HAD LONG-TERM SATISFACTORY BUSINESS DEALINGS WITH JABIR. CURRENT PROBLEM AROSE WHEN SEVERAL RECENT CRUSHED PAPAYA LEAF SHIPMENTS DESTINED FOR OTHER U.S. IMPORTERS HAD BEEN EMBARGOED BY THE FDA IN NEW YORK. FDA CLAIMS THAT PAPAYA LEAVES, SHIPPED UNDER LABEL OF FOOD ADDITIVES, HAVE NEVER BEEN AWARDED SAFE STATUS UNDER 1958 FOOD ADDITIVES REGULATIONS. COMPANIES HAVE BEEN IMPORTING PAPAYA LEAVES CONTINUALLY SINCE 1952 AND RECENT EMBARGO SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN PROMPTED BY A PRIVATE INQUIRY TO THE FDA AS TO PERMISSIBILITY OF IMPORTING PAPAYA LEAVES AND THE REALIZATION BY FDA THAT IT DIDN'T KNOW WHAT CRUSHED PAPAYA LEAVES ARE USED FOR. (FYI. IN MIXTURE WITH MINT, IT IS USED BY HEALTH FOOD INDUSTRY TO MAKE TEA. END FYI.) MAJOR IMPORTERS ARE IN PROCESS OF

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PETITIONING FDA FOR EXCEPTION UNDER SO-CALLED "GRAND-

FATHER" PROVISION, WHICH ALLOWS EXCEPTIONS FOR ITEMS

INADVERTENTLY OMITTED FROM 1958 LIST WHICH HAVE BEEN IN
GENERAL USE PRIOR TO 1958. (FYI. OF THREE IMPORTANT
IMPORTERS DEPT CONTACTED THERE WAS GENERAL VIEW THAT
PETITION WOULD TAKE FROM 90-120 DAYS AND CHANCES OF
SUCCESS ARE REASONABLE TO GOOD. END FYI.)

2. IN HOPES OF AN EARLY RESOLUTION OF THE EMBARGO,
HERBARIUM DOES NOT WISH TO CANCEL SHIPMENT, SIMPLY
POSTPONE IT. THEY SENT JABIR LETTER OF EXPLANATION
ON SEPT. 11, WHICH WOULD NOT HAVE ARRIVED BY THE TIME
JABIR CONTACTED EMBASSY. KISSINGER

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Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
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